

APPENDIX XVI

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College Dictionary

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Based on
**The Random House
Dictionary of the
English Language**
The Unabridged Edition

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Preface

IN THE DECADES recently past, especially since World War II, the educational standards of the world have been extended to embrace more people than ever before. Literacy has increased enormously. Coupled with the technological advances of the period, the necessity for reading and study has resulted in an unprecedented interest in words.

The dictionary has traditionally been the only source of information on language for the majority of people. In it they expect to find how a word is spelled, how it may be hyphenated, how it is pronounced, what its various forms are, what its meanings are, and what its origins and history are. They also expect to find whether a word is technical or general, whether it can be used in polite company or not, and even whether someone who is called a certain word is justified in feeling offended. They want unfamiliar objects illustrated and particular places pinpointed on maps; they want biographical information, geographical, demographic, and political data, abbreviations, symbols, synonyms, antonyms, usage notes—in short, people expect to find condensed between the covers of a dictionary the knowledge of the world as reflected in their language. Above all, they demand that this knowledge be accurate and up to date. Indeed, why not? The dictionary is often the only reference book of any kind that many people ever own.

That these prodigious demands are met is, of course, no accident. A dictionary is the product of specialists, linguists, and highly trained editors who are devoted to researching language and information and to interpreting it and presenting it in understandable form.

The Random House College Dictionary is an abridgment of *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language—The Unabridged Edition*, and its style follows that of the *RHD*. No dictionary, no matter how extensive, could record the entire English language. It is obvious, then, that the editors of any dictionary are compelled to exercise discretion in what is to be included. The goal cannot be completeness: the goal must be judicious selectivity. There is no dearth of re-

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Table of Contents

Preface	v
Editorial Staff	vii
Consultant Staff	viii
Indo-European Language Chart	x
Historical Sketch of the English Language	xi
Etymology Key	xv
Pronunciation Key	xvi
Pronunciation of English	xvii
Usage, Dialects, and Functional Varieties	xix
Guide to the Dictionary	xxii
Table of Common English Spellings	xxxii
 A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	 1
Signs and Symbols	1535
Directory of United States Colleges and Universities	1539

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